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The South Australian Ornithological Association.

MONTHLY PROCEEDINGS.

—June, 1925.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 26th June, 1925, at 8 o'clock.

Bird Sanctuaries.—Mr. J. Neil McGilp reported that a deputation of game-shooters had interviewed the Minister of Agriculture with regard to the bird sanctuaries on the Coorong. He had heard that their desire was to cancel some of them, and make one sanctuary which could be easily recognized. On the motion of Mr. Edwin Ashby, seconded by Mr. F. E. Parsons, the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Messrs. J. W. Mellor and J. Neil McGilp were appointed to act as a Committee and to interview the Chief Inspector of Fisheries on the matter.

Mr. L. Le Souef and party were present, and after being welcomed by the Chairman Mr. Le Souef addressed the members with regard to four species of birds. Wedge-tailed Eagle.—He said that the case was not proven as far as he was concerned that the Wedge-tail actually killed lambs. He was three weeks on Balladonia Station, W.A., and during that time, although watch was kept, the bird did not touch a strong lamb. After that he was on Fraser's Station for three months, during which the bird was not found to touch a lamb. At Earlston Station, north-east of Kalgoorlie, there was one pair of Wedge-tails which nested in a tree 5 feet from the ground. At Glencoe (?), 100 miles south of Kalgoorlie, there were hundreds of Wedge-tails, and 200 were destroyed in a fortnight, and the results as to killing lambs were nil. He added it is our only carrion-eater, and after two years' observation he gave the bird a clean sheet as to the charge of lamb-killing. Magpie Lark.—He had seen this species at all

the wells in the Kimberley District, North-West Australia, fly on to the bullocks and cattle infested with great numbers of ticks and clean off all the ticks. Starling.—He asked members for their opinions on this species. Varied Parrot.—He thought that Mulga Parrot would be a good name for it, as he had seen thousands in the mulga only.

Mr. J. Neil McGilp, in reply, stated that he had seen companies of from four to six Wedge-tails killing lambs. They would swoop down at the ewe and lamb until they finally drove the ewe away, and then they attacked and killed the lamb. He had also seen Wedge-tails kill a young kangaroo. Mr. G. Gurr said he had seen Wedge-tails kill lambs, and in one instance he saw a Wedge-tail carry away a young lamb. Starlings.—Some members stated that Starlings did great damage in the fruit-growing districts, and commandeered the hollows in trees for nesting-places which were formerly used by our native birds. However, on an irrigation settlement at Wood's Point, South Australia, the birds eat the small crustaceans and parasites which attack the lucerne, and the owner of the property stated he wished the Starlings would arrive there earlier for the good work. Varied Parrot.—Our members did not think the name Mulga Parrot would suit this bird with regard to South Australia, as it is found in other country than mulga.

Mr. J. W. Mellor then gave an account of his recent trip to England, the United States, and Canada, especially with regard to the birds met with on the seas (printed elsewhere in this number), and exhibited three extremely rare eggs, viz., those of the Cape Petrel (*Daption capensis*), Giant Petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*), and Wilson's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanites oceanicus*). All these species were found in Australian waters, but breed in the cold southern regions.

—July, 1925.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 31st July, 1925, at 8 p.m.

Bird Sanctuaries.—The Secretary reported that he and Mr. Mellor had waited on the Chief Inspector of Fisheries on 1st instant, and had learned from him the situation as to the sanctuaries on the Coorong and Lake Albert. A deputation representing the professional shooters had interviewed the Minister of Agriculture and requested that all the sanctuaries on the Coorong should be done away with, and that all the waters and islands there should be free for shooting during the open season, and also that the sanctuary near Campbell House, Mr. Bowman's property, on Lake Albert should be cancelled.

On the Coorong, at present, the position is this. It is open for shooting during the season from the entrance at Pelican Point to the Needles; then there is a sanctuary from the Needles to Parnka, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles. It is open again for shooting from Parnka to Wood's Wells, $9\frac{1}{2}$ miles; then there is a second sanctuary from Wood's Wells to Policeman's Point, 5 miles, and beyond that Point it is open with the exception of the islands up to Salt Creek (6 miles from Policeman's Point).

All the islands from Salt Creek to Wood's Wells, except Cattle Island—23 in all—are held by our Association under Annual Licence No. 662 for the purpose of protecting native birds and their nests and eggs. It is to be noted that some of those islands are situated in the second sanctuary and some are in the open portion beyond Policeman's Point. However, the Schedule of the Animal and Birds Protection Act, 1919, provides—“Sanctuaries . . . : Coorong.—All the islands and waters within a radius of 400 yards; all waters and islands between the Needles and Parnka, and between Wood's Wells and Policeman's Point, except Cattle Island.” Cattle Island is leased to a private person for grazing purposes.

As the usual monthly meeting of our Association would not be held until 31st July, the Chief Inspector of Fisheries asked that an expression of opinion be obtained from the members and sent to him for submission to the Minister of Agriculture. The opinions were obtained, and the Chief Inspector was advised as follows:—“The Executive and several of the expert members are unanimously in favour of a proposal for one sanctuary only on the Coorong in addition to the islands therein, provided that the area of the one sanctuary is equal to that of the two sanctuaries as at present constituted, *i.e.*, that the one sanctuary from the Needles south-easterly should cover an area as large as the present sanctuaries from the Needles to Parnka and Wood's Wells to Policeman's Point, the boundaries of the new sanctuary to be fixed, say, from the eastern road to high-water mark on Younghusband Peninsula. They trust that all the islands and waters within a radius of 400 yards thereof will still remain sanctuaries, except Cattle Island. They are entirely opposed to the withdrawal as a sanctuary of the area in Lake Albert near Mr. Bowman's property.”

One suggestion to the Minister of Agriculture was that the one sanctuary should be from the Needles to Hack's Point inclusive— $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length and equal to about 16 square miles. Our suggestion would take the sanctuary 3 miles further south than Hack's Point, and it would be level with Tatunda Bay,

on Younghusband Peninsula, and the boundary on the mainland side would terminate 4 miles north-east of Wood's Wells.

It was suggested that this Association should advertise in the newspapers in December next (or shortly before the opening date, if an alteration is made), giving details of the sanctuary at the Coorong and calling attention to the fact that the islands were included in our lease.

Correspondence.—A letter from the Director of the Science Museum, South Kensington, England, was placed on the table. It was decided to send a full set of "The South Australian Ornithologist" to that Museum, and to place its name on our exchange list for future issues.

Exhibits.—The Secretary exhibited from the S.A. Museum a specimen of *Pedionomus torquatus*, the Plain-Wanderer, taken at Virginia on 18/8/1925. It was shot by a Quail shooter. On dissection it proved to be a female, one ovule being as large as a pea. This species is rarely taken, and with this specimen there are now 10 in all in the S.A. Museum. The others are:—♀ juv., Gilles Plains, -/3/1895; ♀ juv., Gilles Plains, -/3/1895; ♀ juv., Gilles Plains, 15/6/1917; ♀ juv., Gilles Plains, 19/6/1917; ♀ juv., Gilles Plains, -/6/1900; 3 juv., Gilles Plains, -/6/1900; ♂, Wasleys, -/5/1918. Professor J. B. Cleland exhibited a specimen of *Calamanthus fuliginosus*, Striated Field-Wren, ♂; and an *Acanthiza pusilla*, Brown Thornbill, taken in the Port MacDonnell District, south-east of South Australia, on 29/5/1925 (see Notes, printed elsewhere).

Professor Cleland also drew attention to the following paragraph in "Nature," page 146, 31st January, 1925:—"In 1663, in a discussion of a new way of hatching Pigeons, Sir Robert Moray was able to relate that the King [Charles II], when very young, meeting with a Blackbird's nest, and finding but one young one in it, carried it home in the nest, and put it to a Thrush in a cage, who fed the Blackbird as carefully as if it had been her own, but with this difference, that whereas other birds fed their young ones just before they feed themselves, the Thrush fed herself before the Blackbird."

The remainder of the evening was taken up in the examination of 58 foreign birds from the S.A. Museum Collection.

—August, 1925.—

The monthly meeting was held at the Royal Society's Room on Friday evening, 28th August, 1925, at 8 o'clock.

Correspondence.—A letter was received from the Secretary of the Angas Plains School Club, notifying that for the third time

in succession a member of their Club had been successful in winning the South Australian Ornithological Association Bird Trophy, Master Keith Gilbert being the winner for this year. It was decided to congratulate the Club on its success.

Opening of the Duck Season.—Captain S. A. White asked that one or two delegates from our Association should be appointed to attend a meeting on that question to be held at the Royal Society's Room at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, 1st September next. Messrs. Edwin Ashby and J. W. Mellor were appointed, and it was suggested that the opening date for Quail as well as Duck shooting should be fixed for the 1st February of each year.

Bird Notes.—The Secretary reported that a Giant Petrel (*Macronectes giganteus*) had been sent to the S.A. Museum on 7th instant. It was captured by Mr. F. Choules, of 298 Rundle Street, Adelaide. He was fishing from the jetty at Port Noarlunga on 4th August, 1925. The bird was seen in the vicinity and was near the jetty. Mr. Choules was using cockles as bait, and when drawing up his line the Giant Petrel snapped at the cockle as soon as it appeared on the surface of the water and was hooked. The fishing-line became entangled round the bird's legs and wing, and the waves washed the bird under the jetty, where it was secured alive. It lived in captivity for two days. Two other Giant Petrels were seen about Port Noarlunga in company with the bird which was captured. In addition to this specimen there are eight other specimens taken in South Australian waters in the S.A. Museum.

The exhibits for the evening were those of American birds chiefly, and the specimens shown were taken from the collections of Mr. Edwin Ashby and the South Australian Museum, and in addition Mr. Edwin Ashby brought some records of the songs of American and English birds which were reproduced by means of a Rexionola.
